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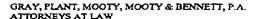
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Please call to confirm receipt of this transmission. Please consider the attached proposed amended claims. We would also appreciate your suggestion of allowable claims.

Cecilia Jaisle

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> Ser. No. 09/519,824 Method of Making Pasta Filata Cheese Filed 03/06/00

# Proposed Amended Claims – This is an Informal Filing – Do Not Enter For Discussion with Examiner Carolyn Paden Only Wednesday, October 17, 2001

# Proposed Claim Amendments

1. (Twice Amended) A method of making a pasta filata cheese selected from cacciocavallo, mozzarella and scamorza low moisture mozzarella and scamorza part skim mozzarella and scamorza, and provolone, the method comprising:

blending a typical pasta filata-type cheese curd,

processing the blended curd in a processed cheese cooker by injecting only direct steam into the blended curd just until the blended curd forms a uniformly melted product, and

packaging and cooling the melted product from the processed cheese cooker.

- A method according to claim 1, that is brine-free and wherein the melted product is blast cooled.
- 3. Cancelled.
- The method according to claim 1, wherein the curd is selected from fresh curd, aged curd, barrel cheese, and mixtures thereof.
- 5. (Twice Amended) A method of making a pasta filata cheese selected from cacciocavallo, mozzarella and scamorza, low moisture mozzarella and scamorza, part skim mozzarella and scamorza, and provolone, the method comprising:

blending a typical pasta filata-type cheese curd,

injecting only direct steam into the blended curd just until the blended curd forms a uniformly melted product, and

packaging and cooling the melted product.

A method according to claim 5, wherein the fat content of the pasta filata cheese 6. is reduced by lowering the fat content of milk used in making the curd.

blended curd.

- 7. A method according to claim 5, wherein the salt level of the pasta filata cheese is determined by adjusting the sale content of the curd before injecting steam into the
- 8. (Cancel this claim; it essentially duplicates allowed claim 19.) A method according to claim 5, wherein various ingredients are added before injecting steam into the blended curd to optimize quality of the pasta filata cheese, the ingredients selected from non-fat dry milk, anhydrous milk fat, milk protein concentrate, concentrated milk fat, dry cream, emulsified, water, salt and mixtures thereof.
- 9. A method according to claim 5, that is brine-free and wherein the melted product is blast cooled.
- 10. (Twice Amended) A method of making a cheese <u>selected from cacciocavallo</u>, mozzarella and scamorza, low moisture mozzarella and scamorza, part skim mozzarella and scamorza, and provolone, the method comprising:

blending a curd having a moisture content of from about 38% to about 48%, a salt content of from about 0.8% to about 2%, a fat content (dry basis) of from about 38% to about 48% and a pH of from about 5.0 to about 5.4,

injecting only direct steam into the blended curd just until the blended curd forms a uniformly melted product, and

packaging and cooling the melted product.

- 11. A method according to claim 10, wherein a thermophilic culture is added to milk used in making the curd.
- 12. A method according to claim 9, wherein injecting only direct steam into the blended curd produces cheese internal temperatures ranging from about 140 to about 180 ° F.

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- 13. A method according to claim 9, wherein injecting only direct steam into the blended curd is accompanied by a minimum auger speed to assure even mixing and melting of the blended curd without lowering fat and moisture content to below that desired for the cheese.
- 14. A method according to claim 10, that is brine-free and wherein the melted product is blast cooled.
- 15. (Twice Amended) A method of making a cheese selected from cacciocavallo. mozzarella and scamorza, low moisture mozzarella and scamorza, part skim mozzarella and scamorza, and provolone, the method comprising:

blending a curd having a moisture content of from about 38% to about 48%, a salt content of from about 0.8% to about 2%, a fat content (dry basis) of from about 38% to about 48% and a pH of from about 5.0 to about 5.4,

processing the blended curd in a processed cheese cooker by injecting only direct steam into the blended curd just until the blended curd forms a uniformly melted product, and

packaging and cooling the melted product from the processed cheese cooker.

- 16. A method according to claim 15, wherein augers in the processed cheese cooker have a closed auger flighting.
- 17. A method according to claim 15, wherein the curd has a moisture content of from about 43% to about 45%, a salt content of from about 1.2% to about 1.5%, a fat (dry basis) of from about 38% to about 42%, and a pH of from about 5.1 to about 5.3.
- 18. A method according to claim 15, that is brine-free and wherein the melted product is blast cooled.

product, and

19. (Allowed) A method of making a pasta filata cheese comprising:

blending a typical pasta filata-type cheese curd,

injecting steam into the blended curd just until the blended curd forms a uniformly melted product, and

packaging and cooling the melted product;

wherein various ingredients are added before injecting steam into the blended curd to optimize quality of the pasta filata cheese, the ingredients selected from non-fat dry milk, anhydrous milk fat, milk protein concentrate, concentrated milk fat, dry cream, emulsifier, water, salt and mixtures thereof.

A method of making a cheese selected from cacciocavallo, mozzarella and 20. scamorza, low moisture mozzarella and scamorza, part skim mozzarella and scamorza, and provolone, the method comprising:

blending a curd having a moisture content of from about 38% to about 48%, a salt content of from about 0.8% to about 2%, a fat content (dry basis) of from about 38% to about 48% and a pH of from about 5.0 to about 5.4, injecting steam into the blended curd just until the blended curd forms a uniformly melted

packaging and cooling the melted product;

wherein injecting steam into the blended curd is accompanied by a minimum auger speed to assure even mixing and melting of the blended curd without lowering fat and moisture content to below that desired for the cheese.

- 21. A method according to claim 19, wherein the fat content of the pasta filata cheese is reduced by lowering the fat content of milk used in making the curd.
- 22. A method according to claim 19, wherein the salt level of the pasta filata cheese is determined by adjusting the sale content of the curd before injecting steam into the blended curd.

23. A method according to claim 19, that is brine-free and wherein the melted product is blast cooled.